

drum farm. Government also sanctioned the establishment of an Agricultural Laboratory. The Trivandrum farm is being considerably extended, and, as no suitable land can be had at Quilon for extending the farm there, arrangements have been made for opening a new farm at Kottarakara. As the work of the Agricultural Department is familiar to most of you, through the numerous leaflets issued by the Director, I shall content myself with remarking that Government are satisfied with the line of work adopted by the Director and they trust that he will continue to have the cordial co-operation of the agricultural classes.

9. Coconut Palm Disease:—The area affected by the coconut blight in North Travancore has at last been delimited. It is estimated to be about 80 square miles—not in one block, but in several blocks, spread over ten taluks of the State. Government are not unmindful of the serious nature of the situation. I mentioned in my last address that the investigations of the Imperial Mycologist, Dr. Butler, were being followed up by the Director of Agriculture and that the latter had been given funds for conducting a series of experiments in selected gardens affected by the disease. Considerable progress has since been made with these experiments. In making them, the Department has been following generally the lines suggested by Dr. Butler. It is too early to draw any definite inferences from these experiments. As pointed out by Dr. Butler, the most difficult of all fungus diseases to check are those which affect the roots of plants, the parasite, which is the probable cause of the coconut disease in Travancore, enters into the tissues of the living roots and is out of the reach of any direct treatment, and no *ready* cure can therefore be looked for. The one obvious remedy of eradicating the disease, by destroying all the diseased material and so preventing further infection, is not practicable, for the reason that the area affected is large, and it would be useless to cut down a diseased tree unless the roots also are dug out and burnt. The experiments recommended by Dr. Butler were by way of applying manures or other substances to the roots of the palms, improving the general health of the trees, searching for disease-resistant varieties and ridding the infected soil of the parasite before replanting. The experiments, which are being made by the Agricultural Department, are in the above directions. As already stated, it is too early to draw definite conclusions from the experiments. It is however seen that, when the general health of a diseased tree is improved by careful culture and the application of suitable manures, it manifests a visible tendency to throw off the disease.

10. Veterinary:—A Veterinary Hospital was opened during the year at Kottayam, and another was sanctioned since the close of the year for Nagercoil, so that we have now three hospitals in the State, as against only one which we had a year ago. A fourth hospital will, in due course, be sanctioned for Quilon.

Forest Revenue.

11. Forests:—The work of the Forest Department during the year lay mainly in the systematic demarcation of the boundaries of the Reserves, the settlement of disputes which had hitherto escaped enquiry, a careful inspection of several

of the working areas for the purpose of judging of the *present* capability of the blocks, and the working down of a large quantity of abandoned timber from the forests. Early in the year, the Conservator reported that, presumably on account of the reckless operations of contractors and permit-holders in previous years, large quantities of abandoned royal and junglewood timber were found lying in the forests in all stages of decay. The systematic removal of this timber from the forests and its transfer to the sale-depots was undertaken through departmental agency. It is expected that it would take another two years or so to finish this work.

12. Revenue:—The net Forest Revenue was Rs. 2,75,000. It exceeded that of the previous year by Rs. 1,10,000. The percentage of expenditure to gross revenue fell from 76 to 68.

Salt, Excise and Customs.

13. Revenue:—Taking the above three branches of revenue together, for which the Excise Commissioner is responsible, there was a substantial increase, as the following figures would show:—

Head of Revenue.	1083 Rs.	1084 Rs.	Increase Rs.
Salt	9,82,568	10,08,854	26,286
Excise (Abkari, Opium and Ganja, and Tobacco) ...	22,11,876	23,22,868	1,10,992
Customs	10,80,942	13,35,552	2,54,610
Total.....	42,75,386	46,67,274	3,91,888

14. Abkari Policy:—His Highness' Government have continued the policy of introducing the Excise system gradually in the administration of the Abkari Revenue, in lieu of the old Farming system. The Excise system was in force, during the year, in the Padmanabhapuram, Trivandrum and Quilon Divisions. The advantage of the system is that it gives to Government the maximum revenue along with the minimum possible licit consumption of liquor. The introduction of the Excise system is generally accompanied by a substantial reduction in the number of liquor shops. For example, during the year, the number of arrack and toddy shops in the Excise area fell from 4,279 to 2,217. It is anticipated that within another three years or so, the Excise system would prevail throughout the State.

Legislative and Judicial.

15. Legislation:—Several important Regulations were passed during the year. Firstly, there was the Regulation providing for the establishment of